



ALEXANDRA COLLEGE DUBLIN

Covid-19 Protocol and Response Plan

Review March 2021

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1. Purpose

Alexandra College is committed to putting in place the conditions for learning, teaching and enjoyment of school life while protecting each child and ensuring in so far as is reasonably practicable the health, safety and welfare of each member of staff in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

These Protocols outline procedures and policies, and the measures to manage and conduct school activities and daily operations at Alexandra College in such a way as to minimise the risk of introduction into the College and, if despite our best efforts it is introduced, to mitigate the risk of the spread of Covid-19 around the school and workplace.

Our plan recognises the importance of education for health, wellbeing, personal development and fulfillment, and for the common good.

2. Introduction

This Response Plan sets out the steps Alexandra College has taken and will take and the measures Alexandra College is putting in place. It provides support for staff on the resumption of teaching, the reopening of our Campus and sustaining on-Campus education within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Our plan incorporates current advice and evolving guidance issued by the National Public Health Emergency Team (NPHE), the [Health Protection Surveillance Centre \(HPSC\)](#), the HSE and the Department of Education on measures to prevent introduction and, if introduced, to mitigate the risk of the spread of Covid-19 in the school community. As the advice issued continues to evolve, this protocol, the steps we take, and the measures we put in place will also evolve and change. This is an ongoing and dynamic process.

Our approach will continue to be balanced, will apply common sense, create awareness, and rely, as always, on the support, engagement, kindness, shared and personal responsibility of the whole Alex school community.

This document provides details of:

- Public Health Advice
- Development of a Response Plan and a Safe Return to School and Work Roadmap
- General advice to prevent introduction and to slow the spread of the virus
- Control measures to minimise and manage identified risks
- Risk factors and supports for individuals at very high risk
- Development of procedures for dealing with a suspected case of Coronavirus
- Staff procedures and duties for returning to work safely and maintaining a safe place of work and learning
- Sick leave and absence management
- Employment assistance and wellbeing programme
- Training Plan
- Communication regarding new measures introduced

The assistance and cooperation of all employees, students, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors is critical to the success of this plan as it evolves. Failure to follow the information and guidance in this document as it evolves, as well as failure to adhere to the school's codes of behaviour, safety procedures and policies, site safety procedures and policies, and suppliers/manufacturers guidance could result in increased risk and potential harm to individuals, the College community and the wider community.

3. Review & Updates

Alexandra College will review and update these Protocols following any new information, advice on or guidance about Covid-19 shared with Alexandra College by the Health Service Executive, the Health and Safety Authority, The Department of Education, The Department of Health and any other relevant bodies. All updates will be communicated to students, parents and all staff as appropriate. Our Response Plan is available on the College website.

Every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of the information provided in this document. Please notify us if you identify any errors or omissions so that we can take appropriate measures. This document is currently correct, to the best of Alexandra College's knowledge, on: 5 March 2021.

4. Return to School and Work Roadmap

Alexandra College will facilitate the sustained resumption of school operations and the return to the workplace by staff safely and in line with the advice and instructions of public health authorities and the Government. The return of employees and of students to the school campus will take place in a planned and careful manner with the support and cooperation of the whole school community.

The Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures seek to prevent the introduction and the spread of Covid-19 and to protect the health and safety of all parties in the workplace at school as far as is reasonably practicable in adherence with the available public health advice. In particular, the Covid-19 Response Plan seeks to comply with the Government's '[Roadmap for the Full Return to School](#)', '[Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business](#)', the '[Return to Work Safely Protocol](#)' and the '[Work Safely Protocol](#)', the '[Covid-19 Response Plan for the safe and sustainable operation of Post Primary Schools](#)' and the '[Covid-19 Response Plan for the safe operation of Primary Schools](#)' and any further development of those roadmaps and protocols.

This roadmap is subject to ongoing review and may be updated or modified as the situation evolves and new guidance and advice is provided.

5. Personal Responsibility

While responsibility for the development and implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and the associated control measures lies primarily with the Board of Management, all staff, students, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors have a personal responsibility both as individuals and collectively as a community to have due regard for their own health and safety and that of others and to assist with the implementation of the Covid-19 Response Plan and associated control measures.

6. Updated Policies & Procedures and Health & Safety Documents

Any reference to this document in and/or any addendums made to the College's Policy & Procedures and Health & Safety documents arising out of Covid-19 or this Response Plan take precedence over any other procedures and policies that exist, and will continue to stay in effect until such conditions are no longer applicable based on updates from the Health & Safety Authority, Health Service Executive and Department of Education. These additions are carefully implemented across all aspects of College operations.

7. Safety Statement and Risk Assessment

A site-specific risk assessment for Alexandra College was undertaken.

Our Safety Statement is being updated accordingly to include all relevant Covid-19 specific control measures now in place.

Where any further risk of exposure to Covid-19 is identified, an additional occupational health and safety risk assessment will be completed and appropriate measures carefully implemented.

a. Initial Risk Assessment Operation

The Risk Assessment identifies and outlines the risks that might affect individuals in Alexandra College and members of the public who interact with our classes and operations.

As part of that initial risk assessment:

- i. School Management surveyed normal College operational procedures, access to the locations and other everyday occurrences to identify any new and additional risks that might arise because of or connected with Covid-19.
- ii. We simulated normal classes, to identify further risks that might occur during term time due to Covid-19.
- iii. We noted and highlighted a number of locations around Campus as further potential risks due to Covid-19 based on access and layout of the locations.
- iv. There is ongoing discussion and collaboration with other members of College management and staff to share other opinions on potential risks.

b. Protocols Following an Accident or Incident

- i. If an accident or incident happens that relates to the measures that were introduced above, or that was not anticipated:
 1. The incident/accident will be recorded.
 2. The Risk Assessment will be re-evaluated to take into account the specifics of the incident.
 3. Further awareness building and training for staff and for students to address the issue will be provided if needed.

c. Risk Assessment Review

- i. A regular review of the Risk Assessment will be conducted to check the following:
 1. Have there been any significant changes that must be addressed?
 2. Are there still any improvements needed to be made?
 3. Have staff or students flagged new problems or noticed issues with the current risk assessment?

4. What has been learned from incidents?

d. **Implementation**

- i. Any identified improvements or additional measures to address changes and new or additional risks will be considered and if appropriate carefully implemented.

8. **General Advice To Prevent Introduction and Spread Of The Virus**

Staff, students and visitors should at all times adhere to the up to date public health advice in relation to protecting oneself and others against the risk posed by the Covid-19 virus.

Updated advice from [the HSE is available on its website](#). Public health advice specific to minimising the risk if Covid-19 for young people, teachers, other staff, their families and the wider school community is provided by the HPSC [here](#).

a. **How it Affects You**

Covid-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) is an infectious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). Someone who has been infected, can potentially have complications including with their lungs, heart, liver and also develop blood-clots, which can lead to severe issues such as multiple-organ failure, pneumonia and post-viral fatigue.

b. **Symptoms**

Common symptoms of coronavirus include:

- a fever (high temperature – 37.8 degrees Celsius or above).
- a cough - this can be any kind of cough, not just dry.
- shortness of breath or breathing difficulties.
- loss of sense of smell or of taste, or distortion of taste

For the complete list of symptoms, please refer to the [HSE Website](#).

Some people infected with the virus, so called asymptomatic cases, have experienced no symptoms at all but do transmit the virus.

c. **How it Spreads**

- i. The virus is spread in fluid and in droplets or aerosols scattered from the nose or mouth of an infected person when that person coughs, sneezes, sings or speaks. The fluid or droplets land on objects and surfaces around the infected person. Other people contaminate their hands by touching these objects or surfaces and then bring the virus into contact with their eyes, nose or mouth by touching them with their contaminated hands. Covid-19 can also spread if droplets or aerosols from an infected person land directly on the mucous membranes of the eye, nose or mouth of another person standing close to them.
- ii. While people are most likely to pass on the infection when they have symptoms, current information suggests that some infected people spread the virus to others although they are asymptomatic or prior to developing or displaying symptoms themselves.
- iii. Current advice suggests that the virus may be less frequently transmitted by children under ten.

- iv. It is still not known how long the virus survives in the air or on surfaces in different conditions. The period of survival may vary under different conditions (e.g. type of surface, temperature or humidity of the environment.)
 - v. Studies indicate that the virus can persist on surfaces for hours and up to several days in the absence of effective cleaning. Thorough and regular cleaning of frequently touched surfaces is essential. If disinfection is required it must be performed in addition to cleaning, never as a substitute for cleaning.
- d. **How To Reduce The Chance Of Transmitting Or Getting Infected By The Coronavirus**

Each member of the school community is expected to read, be familiar with and follow this advice:

- i. ***Stay at Home if unwell***
It is critical that you do not come to school if you are unwell or if any member of your household is unwell with symptoms consistent with Covid-19.
- ii. ***Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth***
Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, your hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose or mouth.
- iii. ***Practice respiratory hygiene***
Make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene. This means avoiding touching your face, eyes, nose and mouth, covering your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow when you cough or sneeze. Then disposing of the used tissue immediately in a closed bin.
By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as cold, flu and Covid-19.
- iv. ***Maintain physical distancing***
If possible maintain an appropriate distance between yourself and others.
Why? When you speak, sing, cough or sneeze, you spread small liquid droplets from your nose or mouth which may contain the virus. If you are too close to another person, they can breathe in the droplets or they may get into their eyes, nose or mouth. The droplets may also come in contact with a person indirectly and get into their system from items or surfaces through the eyes, nose and mouth.
- v. ***Wear a face mask***
When you wear a face mask any droplets you produce are less likely to come into contact with others. It is important that you wear the mask properly, that it is clean and if disposable that it is used only once and disposed of immediately and carefully in a covered bin.
- vi. ***Hand Hygiene***
Regular and thorough hand washing with soap and water is effective for the removal of Covid-19. Where hand washing is not possible, alcohol-based hand sanitiser should be used. Regularly wash your hands with soap and water or clean them with an alcohol-based hand rub especially after touching another person or their personal items, after using the toilet and before eating or preparing food.

Why? Washing your hands with soap and water or using alcohol-based hand rub kills viruses that may be on your hands.

All members of the school community must ensure they are familiar with and follow hand hygiene guidance and advice, wash their hands with soap and water regularly or if that is not possible clean with an alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

In particular, you should wash your hands:

- After coughing and sneezing
- Before and after eating
- Before and after preparing food
- If in contact with someone who is displaying any Covid-19 symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, loss or change of taste)
- Before and after being on public transport (if using it)
- Before and after being in a crowd (especially an indoor crowd)
- When arriving at and leaving school/other buildings
- Before having a cigarette or vaping
- Before and after wearing gloves
- After each class
- After touching potentially contaminated surfaces
- If your hands are dirty
- After toilet use

Good hygiene practices and washing your hands properly and regularly can help stop the spread of the virus. Handwashing facilities and hand sanitisers are available at multiple locations throughout the school campus. For advice from HSE on how to wash your hands the following link will be helpful:

<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/how-to-wash-your-hands.html>

Video advice is available at:

<https://www.facebook.com/HSElive/videos/how-to-properly-wash-your-hands/157857121880007/>

Summary:

Do

- Stay at home if unwell
- Wash your hands properly and often
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your sleeve when you cough and sneeze
- Put used tissues into a bin and wash your hands immediately
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces
- Keep a safe physical distance from others
- Wear a mask when you cannot keep a safe distance from others
- Use own pens and other belongings
- Avoid sharing equipment with others.

Do Not

- Touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not immediately clean

- Share objects that touch your mouth – for example, bottles, cups, cutlery, etc.
- Come to school if you are unwell or if any member of your household is unwell with symptoms consistent with Covid-19

The best way to prevent the spread of Covid-19 is to use proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette and to practice physical distancing. It is crucial that all staff, students, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors are familiar with, and take responsibility for adopting best practice hand and respiratory hygiene, distancing practices and proper use of face-covering.

Control Measures to Address Identified Risks

9. General Measures for the Whole School Community

- A range of essential control measures has been implemented to reduce the risk of the introduction into the school, the spread of Covid-19 virus if it is introduced, and to protect the safety, health and welfare of staff and students in so far as is reasonably practicable by removing hazards where possible or minimising exposure to hazards where removal is not possible.
- The control measures shall continue to be reviewed and updated as required on an ongoing basis.
- It is essential that all staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors are fully aware of the health and safety risks posed by the Covid-19 virus both generally and to them as individuals (e.g. very high risk or high risk category individuals)
- It is critical that staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors are aware of, have full knowledge and understanding of, and adhere to the control measures in place in Alexandra College to prevent the introduction and spread of Covid-19 and to protect safety, health and welfare within the workplace as far as is practicable.
- It is critical that staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors cooperate fully with all current health and safety requirements, public health guidance and advice as it evolves.
- In accordance with the guidance of the public health authorities, control measures include seeking to reduce both the number and duration of physical contacts that staff, students, parents/guardians and visitors have with each other.
- All staff, students, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors should avoid direct physical contact with any other persons in so as far as is possible.
- Access to the school campus will be in line with agreed school procedures and is strictly limited to staff and students. A protocol has been established for contractors, visitors and parents/guardians with access being restricted and limited to those who have obtained prior approval from the Principal.
- It is critical that you do not come to school if you are unwell or if any member of your household is unwell with symptoms consistent with Covid-19.**
- Any member of the school community displaying Covid-19 symptoms should immediately inform the Principal. They will not be permitted to attend at the school if they have any of the listed symptoms. Any member of the school community displaying any of these symptoms must self-isolate and must not attend on campus for 14 days or as otherwise directed.

- k. Any person living with someone who is self-isolating or waiting for a Covid-19 test must restrict their movement for 14 days and not attend at school.

10. How Alexandra College Will Implement Measures to Minimise the Risk of Covid-19

Alexandra College will take a balanced and common sense approach to implementing measures to minimise and manage the risk of the virus being introduced into the school and to reduce spread of the virus if it is introduced without unduly restricting enjoyment of teaching, learning and school life. We focus on creating awareness; limiting access to the Campus; facilitating hand hygiene, respiratory hygiene, and physical distancing; constant ventilation; an enhanced cleaning regime; first aid procedures; making appropriate arrangements for the use of face masks and other PPE; and developing clear procedures for dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 in the school.

a. Creating Awareness

- i. Information posters have been prominently displayed at appropriate locations throughout the Campus including at entrance and exit to school campus and buildings, in corridors, classrooms, offices, staffroom area, and toilet areas. They are intended to inform but also to remind all members of the school community about the importance of hygiene and physical distancing in preventing the introduction and spread of Covid-19 virus and protecting health and safety.
- ii. Staff will be trained and students will regularly engage in learning about the steps required to minimise the risks associated with the virus.

b. Access and Contact Tracing

- i. The prompt identification and isolation of potentially infectious individuals is a crucial step in restricting the introduction and spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the individuals themselves and of other students, employees, contractors and visitors at the school and workplace.
- ii. There will be temperature checks on arrival to Res (the boarding house) and to the Senior School.
- iii. There will be restricted access to campus for people other than students and staff, limiting the number of visitors, parents and contractors entering College buildings or Campus.
- iv. A detailed access log of visitors entering the school campus will be maintained to facilitate contact tracing. Timetables and class registers will be used as contact tracing methods for students and teachers.

v. Procedures for Contact with Parents/Guardians

Alexandra College will as far as is reasonably practicable:

- 1. eliminate direct physical contact between staff and parents/guardians through revised drop-off and pick-up procedures
- 2. provide hand sanitisers at entry/exit points for any individuals coming into the building
- 3. install physical barriers and clear markings to ensure that contact between employees and parents/guardians is kept to a minimum

4. implement a cleaning regime to ensure that contact points for employees and parents/guardians are kept visibly cleaned at all times
5. display advice on Covid-19 measures in visible locations to ensure that parents and visitors are adhering to what is required.

c. Facilitating Hand Hygiene

- i. Appointed personnel will ensure that appropriate hygiene facilities and products are in place to accommodate staff and students adhering to hand hygiene measures.
- ii. Alexandra College will provide access to facilities to support hand hygiene including hand sanitiser in each classroom, at the entrance and exit to every building throughout the Campus, and at various points throughout school buildings.
- iii. Staff and students must contact the Operations Manager as directed where they identify supply running low.
- iv. Advice and training on how and when to perform hand hygiene effectively is available and appropriate to each age group.
- v. Posters on how and when to wash hands are in appropriate locations.
- vi. Arrangements are in place to reduce the need to touch objects by installing no-touch waste containers, propping doors open, and using hand towels dispensers.
- vii. Electric hand dryers have been removed or disabled and replaced with paper towels.

d. Facilitating Respiratory Hygiene

- i. In addition to hand hygiene, good respiratory hygiene and etiquette is necessary.
- ii. Employees and students should become familiar with and follow good respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette.
- iii. Posters on how to cough and sneeze safely are in appropriate locations.
- iv. Appointed personnel will provide bins/bags for the immediate disposal of tissues.
- v. Bins will be emptied at regular intervals.

e. Facilitating Physical Distancing

Physical distancing between people is a key control measure in reducing the spread of infection and minimising the risk of transmission of the virus.

Physical distancing in accordance with current guidelines will be maintained across all College activities so far as is practical using all available rooms and facilities so as to decrease physical contact or interaction between students, between students and staff, between staff and with visitors.

Where the recommended physical distancing is not possible, masks are mandatory.

A balanced approach will ensure that physical distancing is achieved in so far as practicable in a learning environment without it dominating every interaction. Alexandra College will take care to avoid generating tension or

anxiety and some flexibility in the implementation of measures may be required at times to ensure wellbeing.

Everybody is required to be actively aware of the need for physical distancing to protect their own health and safety and that of others and to practice physical distancing as far as possible at all times. Staff may not always be able to maintain physical distance from their students and will use professional judgement and familiarity with current public health advice to balance physical distancing guidelines with learning, their own wellbeing, health and safety, and that of each student.

The implementation of physical distancing will look different across the various ages and stages of learning.

Physical distancing will be achieved in a number of ways:

- i. Reducing numbers in common areas and dining halls
- ii. Establishing multiple isolation areas in each venue
- iii. One-way systems within buildings and throughout the Campus where possible
- iv. 'Keep Left' system where a one-way system is not feasible

Classroom Layout

- v. Classroom layouts are in line with government physical distancing guidelines.
- vi. All available space in the school is utilised and reconfigured to maximise physical distancing and to facilitate classes to learn together as a class.
- vii. All unnecessary furniture has been removed to maximise classroom space.

Junior School

- viii. In Preschool each class group will be divided into two pods with one teacher managing each pod. The pods will be kept apart as much as possible.
- ix. From J3 to J6 each classroom is a bubble and the students in each bubble will be organised into pods of 4 to 6 students to the extent that is possible so as to limit the extent of each close contact group, to focus isolation measures and to aid contact tracing if it becomes necessary.
- x. There will be at least 1m distance between individual pods within the Class Bubble and between individuals in the pod, whenever possible.
- xi. To the greatest extent possible, students and teaching staff will consistently be in the same Class Bubbles. In so far as is practicable, each class grouping will mix only with their own class from arrival at school in the morning until the end of the school day.
- xii. Different Class Bubbles will where possible have separate breaks and meal times or separate areas at break or meal times.
- xiii. Staff members moving from class bubble to class bubble will be limited as much as possible.

- xiv. Contact and sharing of common facilities and educational material between different class bubbles and pods will be limited in so far as is pragmatic.

Senior School

- xv. Assemblies will be streamed so as to ensure distancing while still ensuring a key aspect of our school culture continues.
- xvi. Timetables will be reviewed to facilitate physical distancing to the greatest extent possible. Hour long classes have been introduced: This will reduce movement of large groups around the corridors.
- xvii. Larger classes will be allocated to larger spaces. Class groups may be reconfigured into smaller groups if necessary to achieve physical distancing and to the extent possible.
- xviii. Seating arrangements in home class will be arranged so as to minimise interaction between students from different base classes when they go to their elective classes and from different elective classes when they return to their home class.
- xix. Live streaming within the school will be considered on the rare occasion that class sizes are too big to be facilitated in any one space while maintaining physical distancing.
- xx. There is a Perspex partition at each teacher's desk.
- xxi. A no-hand shaking, no high-fiving, no hugging policy is in place.
- xxii. Gatherings of students and staff in the College at the beginning/end of school and working hours will be prevented.

Signage and Posters

- xxiii. Physical distancing indicative stickers and signs have been located at different locations within the Campus and offices, which shall serve as a guide and a reminder for staff, students, parents/guardians, contractors and visitors to adhere to this essential control measure.

General distancing measures

- xxiv. When passing another person in the school, staff, students and visitors should seek to maintain as much distance as possible from the other party by moving to the opposite side of a corridor and walking in single file.
- xxv. The number of employees permitted to work within each office within the workplace at any particular time shall be limited as a necessary control measure to protect health and safety. Where practicable and to the extent that school needs can be met, office work and non-essential work will continue to be carried out at home as appropriate. The College will develop and consult on any working from home policy.
- xxvi. The number of employees, contractors and/or visitors entering or accessing any office, kitchen or other area within the workplace at any particular time shall also be limited.
- xxvii. The capacity of bathrooms throughout the Campus will be reduced.
- xxviii. In specific settings where, due to the nature of a work or learning activity, or the physical space available, an appropriate physical distance cannot be

ensured, alternative protective measures will be put in place. These will be decided following a detailed risk assessment process and may include:

1. Maintaining as much distance as is reasonably practicable
 2. Minimising any direct contact and provide hand washing facilities, and other hand hygiene aids, such as hand sanitisers, that are readily accessible so individuals can perform hand hygiene as soon as the task is complete
 3. Wearing of face masks in line with public health advice. **Note:** wearing of masks is not a substitute for other measures outlined above. When masks are worn they should be clean and they should not be shared or handled by other colleagues or students. Staff or students who cannot wear face coverings or visors for health reasons will be facilitated wherever possible.
 4. Children under 13 will not be required to wear face masks.
- xxix. Installation of physical barriers, such as clear plastic sneeze guards between employees in close and prolonged exposure to each other.

Face Masks

- xxx. Teachers and second-level students are required to wear face coverings, similar to those worn in shops or on public transport, when a physical distance of 2m cannot be maintained. While the school will have additional disposable or multi-use face masks available for students, teachers, and staff in case a back-up face covering is needed during the day, students are required to bring and are responsible for bringing their own clean face mask every day.
- xxxi. Masks are required where recommended physical distancing cannot be maintained. Anyone who wishes to wear a mask at any other time will not be discouraged. Masks must be worn in all communal areas in Rathmines.
- xxxii. Face masks are not required in the Junior School.
- xxxiii. A face mask should:
1. cover the nose and go under the chin
 2. fit snugly but comfortably against the side of the face
 3. be secured with ties or ear loops
 4. include at least 2 layers of fabric
 5. allow for breathing without restriction
- xxxiv. All members of the community should be familiar with [public health advice on how to wear a mask.](#)
- xxxv. A reusable face mask must be washed daily in a hot wash over 60 degrees Celsius with detergent.
- xxxvi. Wash your hands before putting on and after taking off your mask.

f. **Cleaning**

- i. The College will implement an enhanced cleaning regime using best in class cleaning equipment before school opens and on an ongoing basis while the risk of Covid-19 continues.
- ii. Cleaning of College and associated facilities will be conducted at regular intervals including:
 1. thorough and regular cleaning of communal areas and frequently touched surfaces such as taps, door handles and handrails
 2. regular disinfecting of the College campus using best in class equipment. If disinfection of an area is required, it will be performed in addition to cleaning, never as a substitute for cleaning.
 3. modified cleaning intervals for rooms and work areas: This applies especially for toilets, washroom facilities and communal spaces.
 4. cleaning will be performed at least twice a day and whenever facilities are visibly dirty.
 5. Deep cleaning of carpets, mattresses, floors, kitchens etc prior to recommencement of school.
- iii. Employees will be provided with training and essential cleaning materials to keep their workspace clean (for example disinfection sprays and paper towels).
- iv. All staff will be provided with disinfectant, hand sanitiser and computer cleaning equipment upon their return to the school. Under no circumstances should these cleaning materials be removed from the building.
- v. Disinfectant, cleaning products, paper towels and waste bins are available at multiple locations throughout the Campus.
- vi. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their workstation/work area before and after use each day.
- vii. Equipment in classes such as science, Physical Education, art and music will be fully cleaned at least once a day by cleaning staff and wiped down between rotations by teachers or by the students who used them.
- viii. To the extent possible, instruments should not be shared between students and if sharing is required, the instruments will be cleaned between use. Wind instruments will be cleaned and disinfected between uses.
- ix. Students will be encouraged to wash their hands after using sports equipment.
 - x. Toys and learning equipment will be fully cleaned at least once a day by cleaning staff and wiped down between rotations by teachers.
 - xi. Shared electronics such as tablets and keyboards will be cleaned between uses.
- xii. The College will implement an enhanced waste management process before school opens and on an ongoing basis while the risk of Covid-19 continues.
- xiii. The number of waste collection points will be increased and emptied regularly throughout and at the end of each day.
- xiv. There will be regular collection of used waste disposal bags from offices and other areas throughout the Campus.

g. **Heating & Ventilation**

Adequate ventilation will be ensured by leaving doors and windows open even when heating is on.

h. **PPE for Employees & Visitors**

- i. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), used correctly, may be required in some circumstances to address identified risks of spread of the virus. PPE is selected based on the identified risk to the employee. Examples of PPE include face shields, gloves, clear plastic barriers or Perspex screens, aprons and respiratory protection.
- ii. While correctly using PPE can help prevent some exposures, it should not take the place of other preventative measures.
- iii. Current general guidance from the HSE in relation to the wearing of face coverings, masks and gloves is available at the following link:
<https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/face-masks-disposable-gloves.html>
- iv. PPE is used to address a risk where other preventative measures alone are not sufficient to control against the risk to a reasonably practicable level. PPE will need to be used due to the nature of certain work activities or work areas. This includes where:
 1. there are high levels of daily interaction with people e.g. reception
 2. SNAs
 3. there is a need for close cooperation with other persons or minimum recommended physical distancing cannot be ensured at all times.
- v. Where PPE is required, relevant staff will be notified accordingly and be provided with the necessary PPE and provided with training in the proper use, cleaning, storage and disposal of PPE.
- vi. Nurses and food service staff will be required to wear face shields.
- vii. Full hygiene compliance should be applied and maintained in all circumstances.
- viii. Staff are required to wear PPE consistently and properly when required. In addition, staff must regularly inspect, clean, maintain and replace their PPE as necessary.
- ix. Employees will be provided with PPE in accordance with identified Covid-19 exposure risks and in line with Public Health Advice.
- x. Employees should ensure they are familiar with the proper use, cleaning, storing and disposal of PPE.

Face Masks

- xi. Face masks are required where it is not possible for staff to keep the recommended physical distance between each other or between staff and students, or for students to keep a 1m distance between each other.
- xii. Employees, students, contractors and visitors may wear face masks/coverings at any time within the workplace if they wish to do so and must do so when they are directed to do so by school management.

- xiii. Face masks shall be provided to all employees upon the return to the workplace and staff are responsible for washing reusable masks daily.
- xiv. Visors may be worn in addition to masks. Visors are not a replacement for masks.
- xv. Any staff, students or visitors using face masks/coverings should note that face coverings are an additional safety measure and not a replacement for established control measures such as physical distancing where possible, respiratory etiquette, meticulous hand hygiene and avoiding touching the face, nose, eyes and mouth, which continue to be essential. Users of face masks/coverings should be aware of the risks associated with using masks/coverings such as the potential for contamination caused by improper removal or storage of face masks/coverings or increased risk of transmission due to the increased tendency to touch face while wearing a face mask/covering.

Gloves

- xvi. Gloves are not required generally within the workplace for infection prevention and control purposes according to current guidance. Due to the risks associated with the usage of gloves, Alexandra College will not be providing gloves to staff for general use.
- xvii. Gloves should be worn when cleaning the toilet areas to avoid excessive exposure to cleaning chemicals.
- xviii. Disposable gloves are worn in medical settings and are not as effective in daily life. The Covid-19 virus can get on gloves in the same way as it gets on hands. A person's hands and other surface areas can become contaminated when gloves are removed and disposed.
- xix. Where gloves are necessary, they must not be considered a substitute for hand hygiene and handwashing practices. Hands must be washed whenever gloves are removed. Gloves should not create an additional occupational hazard (such as gloves getting caught in rotating parts). Limitations on wearing time and workers' individual susceptibilities (allergies, etc.) must also be taken into account.

i. First Aid

- i. Trained first aiders shall be provided with updated guidance on dealing with first aid/emergency cases.
- ii. First aid will only be done by one member of staff in a specific day (normally the nurse).
- iii. If an accident occurs, and First Aid is required, it may not be possible to maintain the recommended distance.
- iv. The Assigned Person is the only individual who must attend the individual who requires first aid, and prior to doing so they must first:
 - 1. put on necessary PPE (face shield), and
 - 2. properly sanitise/clean their hands using the recommended guidelines.
- v. An accident report must be filled out as normal.

- vi. In an emergency or in case of a serious incident, call for an ambulance or the fire brigade on 112/999.
- vii. Contact the Principal or nearest first aider giving details of location and type of medical incident.

11. Procedures for Students

- a. **Stay At Home:** If a student is unwell the student must not come to school.
- b. No student may enter the Campus without having first completed and submitted the Self Declaration Form.
- c. If any member of a student's household shows Covid-19 symptoms, the student must not come to school.
- d. If a student develops any symptoms of Covid-19 or if anyone who they come into regular contact with develops symptoms, the student must inform the Principal as soon as possible and not come to school.
- e. Any student who has a temperature of 37.8 degrees or above will not be allowed to attend school until they have been fever free without medication for 72 hours.
- f. Any student who has travelled outside Ireland to a country other than an exempted country on the green list, will not be allowed to attend school until they have self isolated in Ireland for 14 days.
- g. To assist physical distancing and to avoid traffic congestion on Campus and to avoid public transport students should walk or cycle to school if at all possible.
- h. Although there will be adequate dispensers throughout the College, students are advised to have their own hand sanitiser.
- i. Students will be asked to sanitise their hands upon entering the Campus and each building.
- j. Students must wash/sanitise their hands in accordance with public safety advice and in particular after going to the toilet. Then they must return immediately to their classroom.
- k. Students must avoid congregating and stay in small pods.
- l. Where students have to move between classrooms they would move quickly into the new class and sit with members of their core class to the greatest extent possible.
- m. Students should have tissues with them at all times.
- n. Students in Milltown will be required to wear masks whenever recommended physical distancing of 2 metres cannot be maintained and as directed.
- o. Students in Rathmines will be required to wear masks in common areas, such as in queues for dining, in study halls and common rooms.
- p. Students are required to have freshly laundered masks daily.
- q. Students must leave their belongings in an assigned place only.
- r. Students should avoid behaviours that involve hand to mouth contact like putting pens/pencils in your mouth.
- s. Students must not share belongings and should bring their own individual art and equipment supplies..
- t. When in common areas, students must abide by social distancing markers, directional arrows and other related signage at all times.

- u. Students must comply with any instructions from prefects, teachers and school staff in relation to minimising the risk of Covid-19.

12. Procedures in Res

- a. No student may enter Res without having first completed and submitted the Self Declaration Form.
- b. On arrival each student will have a temperature check, be required to use hand sanitiser, have a shower immediately and launder all clothes in which they arrived.
- c. Each student's luggage will be sprayed on arrival.
- d. Students will be advised of arrangements for physical distancing from staff, hand hygiene and respiratory hygiene and laundry. All students will be expected to adhere to and cooperate with these arrangements at all times.
- e. Students in Rathmines will be required to wear masks in common areas, such as in queues for dining, in study halls, on the school bus, and common rooms. The purpose of the mask is to avoid transmitting the virus to others.
- f. 5 day boarders will not share rooms with 7 day boarders.
- g. Access: When cleaners arrive at Res their temperature will be taken. No visitors will be permitted beyond the front door of Res.
- h. Parents, guardians and students will be required to commit to following all Government/HSE guidelines to prevent the spread of Covid-19 during all weekends at home, mid-term and holidays by signing the Covid-19 Exeat Undertaking.
- i. The Arrival procedure for students returning from a visit home or exeat will be the same as the arrival procedure at the start of term.
- j. A separate laundry area for isolation areas has been prepared.

13. Procedures for Parent/Guardians

- a. Parents/guardians must make themselves familiar with the College's Covid-19 protocols before students return to Campus.
- b. Parents/guardians must follow all rules outlined to them by the College while on Campus, especially in regard to where they should go when dropping off and collecting students.
- c. Parents/guardians should encourage students to walk or cycle to school.
- d. It is recommended that parents wait in their car if they need to collect students by car.
- e. Parents/guardians will not be permitted into the College buildings, unless in extraordinary circumstances.
- f. Parents should maintain physical distancing of 2 metres with school staff.
- g. Forgotten items (books, lunch boxes) should be left at the designated drop off point by the security hut.
- h. Any parent visit or meeting with teachers should be by appointment only and will be facilitated in a way that observes physical distancing.

- i. If a parent/guardian does enter the College, they must wear a mask and must sanitise their hands, and they must fill out on the Contact Tracing document with their contact information. They should have their own pen.

14. Outline Risk Factor For People At Higher Risk Or Vulnerable Groups

a. Groups Defined As Being At Very High Risk

Current public health guidelines have identified groups who are defined as being at very high risk. The HSE has set out these groups, which include people who:

- are over 70 years of age - even if you're fit and well
 - have had an organ transplant
 - are undergoing active chemotherapy for cancer
 - are having radical radiotherapy for lung cancer
 - have cancers of the blood or bone marrow such as leukaemia, lymphoma or myeloma, who are at any stage of treatment
 - are having immunotherapy or other continuing antibody treatments for cancer
 - are having other targeted cancer treatments which can affect the immune system, such as protein kinase inhibitors or PARP inhibitors
 - have had bone marrow or stem cell transplants in the last 6 months, or who are still taking immunosuppressive drugs
 - severe respiratory conditions including cystic fibrosis, severe asthma, pulmonary fibrosis, lung fibrosis, interstitial lung disease and severe COPD
 - have a condition that means you have a very high risk of getting infections (such as SCID, homozygous sickle cell)
 - are taking medicine that makes you much more likely to get infections (such as high doses of steroids or immunosuppression therapies)
 - have a serious heart condition and you are pregnant
- see <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/people-at-higher-risk.html>

b. At Risk/Vulnerable Students:

- i. Any student who has a concern regarding personal high risk, or has a family member/household contact with at very high risk, should discuss the situation with their GP/specialist (or an appropriate medical professional) and with the Principal.
- ii. Students at high risk will be facilitated to learn from home and have continued connection with their classmates.

c. At Risk/Vulnerable Staff:

- i. Any staff member who has a concern regarding personal higher risk, or has a family member/household contact with higher risk, should discuss the situation with their GP/specialist (or an appropriate medical professional) before making a decision on whether to return to work. The Board of Management may seek medical advice in such cases.
- ii. Vulnerable workers will be facilitated to work from home where possible.
- iii. If an at-risk or vulnerable employee cannot work from home and must be in the workplace, it must be ensured that they are preferentially supported to maintain a physical distance of 2 metres.

15. Development Of Procedures And Response Plan For Dealing With A Suspected Case Of Covid-19

- a. Alexandra College has appointed the following people to the team in charge of dealing with a suspected case of Covid-19 in the College: Principal, Deputy Vice Principal, Operations Manager, School Nurse, Head of Res, Head of Junior School.
- b. The prompt identification and isolation of any potentially infectious person is a crucial step in restricting the spread of the virus and protecting the health and safety of the person themselves, students, employees, contractors and visitors at the workplace. A detailed log of those entering the Campus will be maintained.
- c. Designated isolation areas are available within the school building.
- d. The designated isolation area is behind a closed door and away from other students and staff. The following are the locations of the designated isolation areas:
 - i. Milltown Campus – sick bays beside Nurses office and adjoining bathroom.
 - ii. Rathmines Campus- isolation room in corridor to the left of reception with adjoining bathroom.
- e. The possibility of having more than one person displaying signs of Covid-19 has been considered and a contingency plan for dealing with additional cases has been planned.
- f. In the case of the possibility of one or more persons displaying the signs of Covid-19, an additional isolation areas/contingency plan is:
 - i. Milltown Campus – second sick bay beside Nurses office.
 - ii. Rathmines – isolate in original sick bay to right of reception or ‘Teaching’ block where additional facilities are in place.
- g. Routes to both locations will be by the least populated route, such as fire escapes and fire corridors. Where movement between buildings is required, the priority will be on getting the person outside as quickly as possible.
- h. If a staff member or student displays symptoms of Covid-19 the response team must:
 - i. isolate the staff member/student if they cannot leave the Campus immediately
 - ii. ensure appropriate sanitation and PPE is in use
 - iii. accompany the individual to the designated isolation area by the isolation route, keeping at least 2 metres away from the symptomatic person and also making sure that others maintain a distance of at least 2 metres from the symptomatic person at all times
 - iv. provide a mask for the person presenting with symptoms if one is available. The individual must wear the mask at all times, especially if in a common area with other people or while exiting the premises. Supplies of masks will be available throughout the school buildings.
 - v. contact parent/guardian of student or agreed contact for staff members
 - vi. assess whether the unwell individual can go home immediately, call their GP and continue self-isolation at home
 - vii. facilitate the person presenting with symptoms to remain in isolation if they cannot go home immediately and in the case of a staff member facilitate them calling their GP

- viii. arrange transport home or to an assessment centre if the affected person has been directed to go there by their GP for medical assessment.
- ix. Advise the affected person:
 - 1. to cover their mouth and nose with disposable tissue(s) when they cough or sneeze, and to put the tissue in a covered bin immediately.
 - 2. to avoid touching other people, surfaces and objects
 - 3. not to go to their GP's surgery or any pharmacy or hospital
 - 4. not to use public transport
 - 5. to continue wearing the face mask until they reach home
- x. if the person is too unwell to go home or if advice is required, contact 999 or 112 and inform them that the sick person is a Covid-19 suspect
- xi. carry out an assessment of the incident which will form part of determining follow-up actions and recovery, including all areas used by the individual.
- xii. arrange for appropriate cleaning of the isolation area and workplace areas involved
- xiii. arrange for the proper waste management of all PPE and cleaning materials used
- xiv. maintain student and staff confidentiality
- xv. provide advice and assistance if contacted by the HSE.
- i. The individual should avoid touching people, surfaces and objects. The individual should be advised to cover their mouth and nose with a disposable tissue when they cough or sneeze and to put the tissue in the waste bag provided immediately.
- j. The LWR will be advised.
- k. The isolation area will be out-of-use until cleaned and disinfected.
- l. Arrangements are in place for any classroom space where the symptomatic staff or students were located to be cleaned and disinfected.
- m. Arrangements are in place for cleaning and disinfection of the isolation area and any other areas involved, as soon as practical after the affected person has left the building.
- n. Cleaners have been trained in dealing with contaminated areas and supplied with the appropriate PPE.
- o. The College will provide, as is reasonably practicable:
 - o Ventilation, i.e. via a window or door
 - o Tissues
 - o Hand Sanitiser
 - o PPE: gloves, masks.
 - o Clinical waste bags.

16. Contingency Planning for Partial or Full School Closure

- a. Alexandra College will continue to develop and invest in the digital technology and teaching skills to continue to provide excellent education remotely if necessary.

17. Procedures for Contractors, Visitors and Deliveries

- a. Access to the Campus will be in line with agreed school procedures and is limited to those who comply strictly with all procedures.

- b. Contractors/visitors must make themselves familiar with the College’s Covid-19 protocols before attending Campus.
- c. Contractors/visitors may only attend Campus once they have an allocated appointment time.
- d. Contractors/visitors/deliveries must report to Reception and complete Contact Tracing Log. The purpose on the Log is to facilitate the contract tracing of the virus to inform anyone who may be affected by it.
- e. Contractors must wear a mask while on Campus and sanitise their hands on arrival and regularly throughout the day.
- f. Deliveries will be left at a designated area with the security team.

Procedures for Employees

18. Lead Worker Representatives

In accordance with the Return to Work Safely Protocol, the following Lead Worker Representatives have been appointed:

Name(s):
Yvonne Airey
Franz Schutte
Eddie Fitzgerald
Barry Rycraft
Yvonne Ginnelly

- a. The role of the Lead Worker Representatives is to:
 - i. work collaboratively with the College management to ensure that Covid-19 measures are implemented and adhered to in the workplace to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare of employees in relation to Covid-19 and in line with the Return to Work Safely Protocol and current public health advice
 - ii. consult with and represent all staff in the workplace and be aware of specific issues that may arise in respect of different staff cohorts on matters relating to Covid-19 in the workplace
 - iii. keep up to date with the latest public health advice
 - iv. promote good hygiene practices, in conjunction with school management, such as washing hands regularly and maintaining good respiratory etiquette along with maintaining social distancing in accordance with public health advice
 - v. monitor, in conjunction with school management, adherence to measures put in place to prevent the spread of Covid-19;

- vi. conduct regular reviews of safety measures that are in place to address and suppress Covid-19 in the workplace
 - vii. report any issues of concern immediately to school management and keep records of such issues and actions taken to rectify them
 - viii. Consult with the school management on the school's Covid-19 Response Plan in the event of someone developing Covid-19 while in school including the location of an isolation area and a safe route to that area
 - ix. Following any incident, assess with the school management any follow up action that is required.
- b. The necessary training will be provided for the lead worker(s) and a framework for how they will approach their work at school level will be agreed, which includes regular and meaningful engagement between the lead worker, school leadership and the Board of Management to ensure implementation of measures to prevent spread of the virus. Staff should be familiar with the Department of Education's training materials which are available online.
 - c. If a staff member has any concerns or observations in relation to the Covid-19 Response Plan and control measures or the adherence to such control measures by staff, students, contractors or visitors, he/she should contact one of the Lead Worker Representatives.
 - d. If a control concern is identified by the LWR or is notified to the LWR by a staff member, the LWR will bring this to the attention of the Principal. Action points for addressing the issue will where possible be agreed between the LWR and the Principal as a matter of urgency. Staff will be informed of the outcome.
 - e. Alexandra College has appointed representatives: Adam Coyle, Operations Manager, and Aideen Corr, Deputy Principal who are tasked with communicating health advice regarding Covid-19 around the workplace.
 - f. Alexandra College will:
 - i. keep all employees up to date on information and changes to the public health advice issued by the HSE and the Government to help reduce the introduction and spread of Covid-19
 - ii. agree with employees any restructuring of work patterns that may be required to implement the Covid-19 prevention measures in the workplace
 - iii. create and implement a pre-return to work self-declaration form (RTW) and confirmation of understanding of new Covid-19 protocols
 - iv. provide induction training to all current employees and new employees with the latest up-to-date advice and guidance on public health
 - v. carry out a risk assessment and put in place the necessary measures identified in the risk assessment to prevent the introduction of Covid-19 into the workplace and the spread of Covid-19 in the workplace
 - vi. implement temperature testing in line with public health advice
 - vii. put processes in place to deal with suspected cases of Covid-19
 - viii. display information notices of signs and symptoms of Covid-19 in all buildings throughout both the Rathmines and Milltown campuses.

19. Employee Duties and Procedures

- a. Employees should note that they have a legal obligation under **Section 13 of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005** to comply with health and safety requirements and to take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of their colleagues and other parties within the workplace.

- b. **Procedure for Returning to Work**

To facilitate a safe return to work, staff duties include, but are not limited to:

- i. All staff are required to adhere to the Covid-19 Response Plan and the control measures outlined. The cooperation and assistance of all staff is essential to reduce the risk of spread of Covid-19 and to protect your health and safety as far as is practicable in the workplace. All staff have a key role to play.
- ii. All staff are required to complete and sign an online '**Return to Work Form**' self-declaration (RTW) form at least 3 days before any return to work at the College Campus. This RTW Form will be sent out to each employee in advance of the school opening. This form will be made available electronically. The purpose of the form is to get confirmation from an employee that, to the best of his/her knowledge, he/she has no symptoms of Covid-19 and is not self-isolating or cocooning or awaiting the results of a Covid-19 test.
- iii. In accordance with public health advice, certain responses to the RTW form will preclude an employee from returning to the workplace for health and safety reasons, if for example, the employee's return to the workplace would result in an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the employee and/or of other persons.
- iv. If a staff member's request to return to the workplace cannot be facilitated, the employee will be advised to seek medical advice and arrangements for remote working will be considered. Decisions with respect to working remotely will be guided by DES instructions, school needs to ensure teaching and learning, and local arrangements by the Board of Management for non-teaching staff.
- v. All staff must inform the Principal if there are any other circumstances relating to Covid-19, not included in the form, which may need to be disclosed to facilitate their safe return to work. The RTW form opens the conversation between the employer and the employee to discuss their individual circumstances in a sensitive manner. Please speak with the Principal.
- vi. Any staff member who has travelled outside Ireland will not be allowed to attend at school until they have confirmed compliance with [relevant restrictions and measures for international travel](#) in place at the time of travel out of or into Ireland. Arrangements will be made for them to work remotely if appropriate. Travel should not be arranged unless leave will cover restrictions in place.
- vii. All staff will coordinate, cooperate and work seamlessly with their colleagues to ensure that physical distancing is maintained, and office capacity limitations are complied with.
- viii. All staff must familiarise themselves with the Department of Education's [Covid-19 training materials](#) which are available online.

ix. All staff will undertake and complete online Covid-19 Induction Training prior to returning to the Campus and confirm they have read and understood updated protocols and procedures. The aim of the training is to ensure that employees have full knowledge and understanding of:

- Latest up to-date advice and guidance on public health
- Covid-19 symptoms
- Very high risk and high-risk groups
- What to do if a staff member or student develops symptoms of Covid-19 while at school
- Outline of the Covid-19 response plan and details of control measures and health and safety requirements
- Identification of points of contact

c. Procedure for Maintaining a Safe Place of Work

To maintain a safe place of work, staff duties include, but are not limited to:

- i. All employees should keep informed of and comply with the most up to date advice of the public health authorities by consulting websites and other sources of information directly.
- ii. All staff must be aware of, and adhere to, good hygiene and respiratory etiquette practices .
- iii. Staff are required to sanitise their hands upon entering the Campus and each building.
- iv. Staff should keep fully informed of the control measures in place, any changes to the control measures, and their duties and responsibilities in preventing the spread of Covid-19.
- v. If a staff member is unsure about any aspect of the Covid-19 Response Plan, the associated control measures, or his/her duties, he/she should immediately seek guidance from the Principal.
- vi. There will be adequate hand sanitiser dispensers throughout the College. Each staff member is responsible for informing the Operations Manager if they notice that supply of sanitiser or hand soap is low in any area.
- vii. Where possible teachers should maintain a minimum of 1m distance and where possible 2m. They should take measures to avoid close contact at face to face level such as remaining standing rather than sitting beside/crouching down.
- viii. Staff may wear masks in Milltown, whenever they wish. They are required to do so when the recommended physical distancing is not possible to maintain.
- ix. Staff will be required to wear masks in common areas in Rathmines, such as in queues for dining, study halls and common rooms.
- x. Staff will be provided with reusable masks on return to school. Staff are responsible for laundering their masks daily.
- xi. All senior school teachers have been offered the option of having a Perspex screen at their desk.
- xii. When in common areas staff must abide by social distancing markers, directional arrows and other related signage at all times.

- xiii. A one-way system will operate in the staff room and the capacity has been reduced. The Library and some of the rooms in the old residence building will be available to staff to work in when they need quiet working space.
- xiv. Staff are encouraged to use stairways within the workplace as much as possible. Lifts should only be used where strictly necessary.
- xv. Staff must leave their belongings in an assigned place only.
- xvi. Staff must bring, use and clean their own equipment and utensils (cup, cutlery, plate etc.)
- xvii. Staff should thoroughly clean and disinfect their workstation/work area before and after use each day.
- xviii. Smoking (or vaping) is not permitted within the school campus or its immediate surrounds.
- xix. All employees must make themselves aware of the signs and symptoms of Covid-19 and monitor their own wellbeing.

d. Arrangements for physical distancing

- i. Increasing separation: All available space in the school is availed of to safely maximise physical distancing. Class space has been reconfigured to maximise physical distancing.
- ii. Where possible the teacher's desk is placed at least 1m and where possible 2m away from pupil's desks.
- iii. Decreasing interaction:
- iv. Limit interaction on arrival and departure and in hallways and other shared spaces.
- v. If students need to move about within the classroom to perform activities (for example to access a shared resource) this should be organised to the greatest extent possible to minimise congregation around the point of access to the shared resource.
- vi. Students and teachers should avoid sharing personal items such as pens and other writing materials, tablets and phones to the greatest extent possible
- vii. Where teaching and learning involves use of keyboards or tablets teachers should clean the contact surfaces of the devices regularly.
- viii. Office capacity is to be limited to facilitate the maintenance of minimum 2m physical distancing between designated workstations and staff. When working within an office, staff should ensure that they only use workstations that ensure a minimum 2m physical distance from other persons. For this purpose, staff may, on occasion be required to use another workstation other than their own normal designated workstation.
- ix. All meetings, as much as possible, must be conducted via phone or online virtual platforms. This includes meetings between staff unless such meetings can be conducted in accordance with social distancing requirements. Where face to face meetings are absolutely necessary, the length of the meeting and the numbers attending should be kept to a minimum and participants must maintain physical distancing at all times.

- x. All large meetings, events and in-person gatherings - assemblies, open days, parent meetings, all staff meetings, AlexEvents will be organised on Zoom or otherwise online.
- xi. Breaks should be organised in such a way as to facilitate maintenance of physical distancing during breaks. Working and break areas should be reorganised in order to maintain physical distancing guidelines. Staff should ensure that they maintain a minimum 2m physical distance from other persons during lunch and break periods. Staff are permitted to leave the workplace for their lunch and break periods if they wish to do so.

e. Procedures If A Member Of Staff Develops Signs Or Symptoms Of Covid-19

All staff must follow these instructions if they develop signs and symptoms of Covid-19 during work:

- i. If a member of staff develops symptoms of Covid-19 or if anyone who they come into regular contact with develops symptoms, the staff member must inform the Principal and not attend at Alexandra College.
 - ii. Employees must self-isolate at home and contact their GP promptly for further advice if they display any signs or symptoms of Covid-19.
 - iii. Employees must stay out of work until all symptoms have cleared following self-isolation and not return or attend school under any circumstances if they have symptoms of Covid-19.
 - iv. No staff member who has a temperature of 37.8 degrees or above will be allowed to attend class/work. Employees must complete any temperature testing as implemented by Alexandra College.
 - v. Staff must inform the Principal and Board of Management of this situation as soon as possible. In such cases Covid-19 leave will apply (see [DES Circular 0025/2020](#)).
 - vi. Complete the RTW form before they return to work and fully comply with the Return to the Workplace Safely Procedure.
- f. Reporting Requirements Under Occupational Health and Safety Legislation if an Employee Contracts Covid-19**

Covid-19 is reportable under the Infectious Diseases (Amendment) Regulations 2020 by a medical practitioner who becomes aware of or suspects an instance of such disease. Such a report should be sent to the Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC) in the HSE: <https://www.hpsc.ie/notifiablediseases/>.

20. Communication And Training Plan For Employees Regarding New Measures - Procedure For Returning To Work (RTW)

a. Overview and Timeline of Training Plan Being Implemented for Employees

Employee training will be delivered prior to their return to work. Before staff return to work Alexandra College will:

- i. provide to all returning staff:
 1. details of the online Induction Training for completion by staff prior to the return to the workplace

2. details by email of any additional health and safety measures applicable to facilitate the staff member's return to the school campus
- ii. explain the mandatory meeting & training before the beginning of the new academic year
- iii. update and inform members of staff by email of any new changes and implementations following the guidelines from HSE.

21. Contingency Measures To Address Increased Rates Of Employee Absenteeism, and Implementation Of Measures Necessary To Reduce Spread Of Covid-19

- a. How the College will manage Employee Absenteeism
 - i. Reduce numbers in offices and implement roster for administration staff.
 - ii. Establishment of isolation areas in each venue.
 - iii. Re-configure staff room to ensure social distancing is adhered to.
 - iv. Temperature check on arrival to Campus.
 - v. Hand sanitation on entry to any building within Campus.

22. Sick Leave and absence management - Covid-19 Leave

- a. The management of a Covid-19 related absence will be in line with agreed procedures currently addressed for teaching personnel and SNAs in [DES Circular Letter 0049/2020](#). This may be updated for the new school year.
- b. For privately paid non-teaching staff, Alexandra College will be responding in line with HSE advice with regards to high risk or vulnerable groups. Sick leave policies may be amended.
- c. A staff member who has a concern regarding personal higher risk, or a family member/household contact with higher risk, should discuss the situation with their GP/specialist (or an appropriate medical professional) and follow their advice in relation to whether or not they should return to work.
- d. Reasonable accommodation of employees will also be a factor such as the consideration being given to the employee to work remotely.

23. Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme

- a. Alexandra College aims to protect and support the health and wellbeing of all staff (physical, mental and spiritual) both at work, whether in the Campus or at home and outside of work. The College is mindful that the support and promotion of employee health and wellbeing is particularly important in the current context where the Covid-19 pandemic has caused considerable challenges for, and disruption to, people's personal, family and social lives as well as their work arrangements.
- b. Alexandra College aims to foster a culture and a work environment that support healthy behaviours and employee wellbeing and shall continue to make health and wellbeing tools and guidance available to staff as well as organising suitable support programmes, initiatives and events.
- c. By way of reminder, employees should take note of the following health and wellbeing resources that are available:

- i. The DES Employee Assistance and Wellbeing Programme is a free, confidential and independent wellbeing support service that is available to teaching staff and SNAs. Spectrum.Life is the new EAP service.
- d. These are challenging times for everyone. Should a staff member experience any stress or anxiety in respect of work or work arrangements, he/she should feel free to speak to the Principal.

24. Communication

- a. The College will continue to communicate regularly with the school community on risks identified and measures implemented to prevent the introduction and spread of the virus.

25. Mental Health and Wellbeing

- a. The whole Alexandra College community has worked together very well since the Campus closed in March to support each other and continued learning. We will continue to support each other and work together to create the conditions for safety, calm, belonging and connectedness to the school, self- and community-efficacy and hope. We will support each student with specific focus on wellbeing, enjoyment of school, engagement with learning and socialising with friends.
- b. Alexandra College understands that our employees and members of our community may be suffering from anxiety or stress this time and may even have gone through traumatic personal events. With that in mind, we urge you to use the following supports to help give your guidance for your own personal mental health and wellbeing:
- c. Minding your mental health
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/minding-your-mental-health-during-the-coronavirus-outbreak.html>
- d. Young people's mental health
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/young-peoples-mental-health-during-coronavirus.html>
- e. Older people's mental health
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/older-peoples-mental-health-during-coronavirus.html>
- f. Bereavement and grief
<https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/covid-19/bereavement-and-grief-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic.html>
- g. A range of supports and advice is also available from the Health and Safety Authority on work related stress at: [https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Workplace Stress/](https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Topics/Workplace%20Stress/)
- h. The Government's "In This Together Campaign" also provides information on minding one's mental health as well as tips on staying active and connected and may be useful for use by employers and workers:
<https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/together/?referrer=/together/>

26. Information on Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety

- a. Health & Safety Authority: www.hsa.ie
- b. Health Service Executive: <https://www2.hse.ie/coronavirus/?source=banner-www>
- c. Health Protection Surveillance Centre (HPSC):
<https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>